

Nationwide Survey of State Boards of Health

Washington State Board
of Health

July 2003

What Role Do State Boards of Health Play in Other States?

- How many states have a state board of health?
- Where are those states?
- How do these state boards of health compare to the Washington State Board of Health ?

What Information Already Exists?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
 - Profile of State And Territorial Public Health Systems: United States 1991
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
 - State Health Information Database – based on Public Health Foundation's 1991 Public Health Chartbook and CDC Profile
- No nationwide surveys completed since 1991

Washington's Nationwide Survey Conducted in 2002-2003

- Identify whether a state board exists in another state
- Compare powers, duties and governance structures of each state board
- Consider development of governance performance standards

Criteria

1) Authority

- Assigned advisory and/or regulatory authority to protect and promote the health of the state population

2) Appointments

- Formal appointment by Governor and/or determined by state law

3) Staff

- Assigned to facilitate assigned to fulfill responsibilities

4) Funding Source

Information Collected About Each Board

- Authority
- Board composition
- Staffing
- Funding source
- Relationships with local health jurisdictions

Findings-Board Authority

- Nationwide 30 states have a state board of health (60%)
- All state boards (100%) have advisory authority
- Twenty-two state boards (27%) also set policy
- Eight state boards (36%) also oversee or direct the state health agency

Findings-Board Composition

- Appointments
 - Governor appoints members in all but 1 state
 - Legislature confirms members in 9 states
- Membership
 - Number of members ranges from 6-23
 - Board members have set terms in all states
 - Types of appointments are broad ranging

Findings-Staffing and Funding

- Staffing
 - Independent full time staff in 13 states
 - State agency staff in 17 states
- Funding
 - All funded with state dollars
 - Five states also receive federal funding

Findings-Local Health Jurisdictions

- Some states have local health jurisdictions that are part of local government
- Some are extensions of state government
- Some states have both state and local types
- Some states share responsibility between state and local government

Changes Since 1991 Reporting

- In 1991, 34 state boards of health identified
- Since 1991, 3 state boards eliminated
- Prior to 1991, 3 state boards eliminated but reported as existing in 1991
- Since 1991, Utah created a state board of health
- In 1991, Georgia state board of health missed
- California and Michigan now considering re-establishment of a state board of health

Conclusions

- Washington's State Board of Health is in the mainstream nationally
- No national trend to eliminate boards
- Some states may re-establish a state board of health
- A model Public Health Act includes a state board of health
- National and state performance standards need to include governance and leadership standards

Recommendations

- 1) Provide survey information to other states
- 2) Share information with CDC and ASTHO to help update their records
- 3) Support efforts to create a national forum for state boards of health as appropriate
- 4) Work with state and national entities to develop governance tools applicable to state boards of health as appropriate

Suggested Board Motion

- *The Board authorizes staff to distribute the report, Washington State Board of Health Nationwide Survey of State Boards of Health, as a draft for review and comment.*
- *The Board directs staff to work with state and national organizations as other projects allow to assist with their efforts to strengthen the performance of state boards of health.*